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ABSTRACT

This report details findings of a national questionnaire survey of the attitudes and plans of American adolescents. Participating were 1,327 students between 14 and 18 years of age in a nationally representative sample. To permit regional comparisons, the questionnaires were mailed to representative households within each of the nine United States Census regions. The report summarizes findings "at a glance" in 11 categories: (1) schools; (2) student environment; (3) courses important for future success; (4) attitudes; (5) opportunities; (6) effort and grades; (7) role models; (8) family relationships; (9) outside activities; (10) top career choices; and (11) the future. The report then provides discussion of the survey findings under the following headings: (1) "The American Dream"; (2) "A Sense of Opportunity"; (3) "Viewing the World around Them"; (4) "Their Future"; (5) "Continuing Their Education"; (6) "Their Future Careers"; (7) "Marriage and Children"; (8) "Public versus Private [Schools]"; (9) "Grades"; (10) "Course Ratings"; (11) "Safety and Security"; (12) "Discipline"; (13) "Teachers' and Administrators' Caring and Concern"; (14) "Their Lives Outside the Classroom"; (15) "The Effect of Household Income"; (16) "Family Life"; (17) "A Role Model in the Family"; and (18) "The Effect of Teen Employment." Among the findings, the report notes that most youth indicated that they are positively connected to family and school and continue to view parents as significant sources of support. When asked to assess their schools, most teenagers provide ratings of "A" or "B." The average amount of time spent on homework appears to be on the decline, and the proportion of students who always feel safe in school dropped to 37 percent from 44 percent in 1998. Participation in extracurricular activities is down to 77 percent from 82 percent in 1998. The report includes 35 data tables. (EV)

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THE STATE OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH

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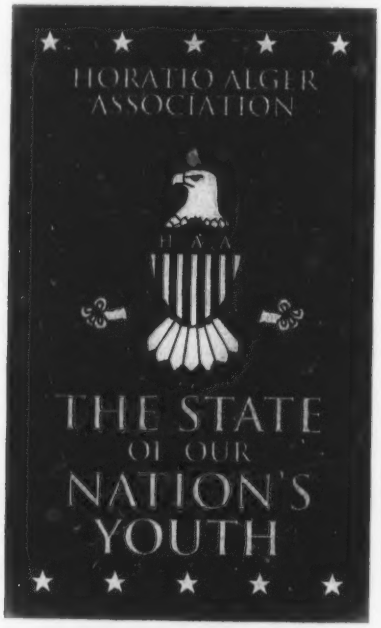

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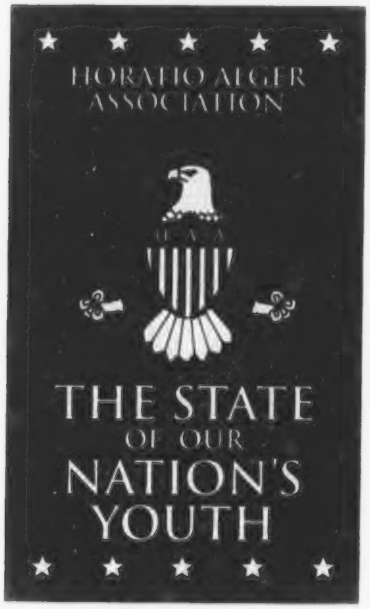

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments v

Introduction 1

Foreword 2

At a Glance: Major Survey Findings 4

Findings 7

- The American Dream 7
- A Sense of Opportunity 8
- Viewing the World Around Them 8
- Their Future 9
- Continuing Their Education 9
- Their Future Careers 10
- Marriage and Children 11

The Academic Environment 11

- Public vs. Private 11
- Grades 12
- Course Ratings 12
- Safety and Security 13
- Discipline 14
- Teachers' and Administrators' Caring and Concern 14

Their Lives Outside the Classroom 14

Demographic Characteristics 15

- The Effect of Household Income 15
- Family Life 16
- A Role Model in the Family 16
- The Effect of Teen Employment 17

The Future 17

The Survey 18

DATA TABLES

Important To Personal Success 22
A Sense Of Opportunity 22
Degree Of Effort And Challenge 23
Greatest National Problems 23
Greatest Problem Or Challenge During The Next Year 24
Plans After High School 25
Greatest Motivating Factor For Seeking Further Education 25
Have Started Planning For How To Pay For College Education 26
Expected Total Cost Of First Year Of College 26
Ways In Which Expect To Finance Costs Of College Education 27
Top Ten 1999 Career Choices 27
What Salary Do You Expect To Earn Per Year When You Begin Your Career? 28
Marriage And Children 28
How Students Grade Their Schools' Overall Performance 28
Student Opinion of Public vs Private Education 29
Type Of College Would Prefer To Attend 29
Cheating Behavior In Schools 29
Challenging Courses, Homework, And Grades: Self–Reported 30
Amount Of Work Required By Teachers And Parents 30
Quality Of Courses 30
Ratings Of The Importance Of Courses 31
Amount Of Safety/Security In School 31
Concern And Availability Of Teachers And Administrators 32
Participation In Cocurricular Activities 32
Teens' Social Life 33
Sense Of Opportunity By Household Income 33
Amount Of Effort Personally Put Into School Work By Household Income 33
Sense Of Opportunity By Family Type 34
Amount Of Effort Personally Put Into School Work By Family Type 34
Male Family Relationships 35
Female Family Relationships 35
If You Could Pick One Person To Be Your Role Model, Which Of The Following Categories Would Your Role Model Be In? 36
Teens Holding Jobs 36
Map Of U.S. Census Regions 37
Association Fact Sheet 38

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *STATE OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH* is an annual effort to give voice to what's on the minds and in the hearts of the country's young people. In undertaking this important project, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans is honored to have partners who share our dedication to bringing the hopes, dreams, opinions, and concerns of our children to the attention of the nation.

First and foremost, the Association is grateful to its Board of Directors and all its Members for their strong, continuing commitment to this effort. We extend a special note of appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. George L. Argyros, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Egan, Mr. and Mrs. Terry M. Giles, Mr. and Mrs. H. Wayne Huizenga, Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Knowlton, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Lay, Mr. and Mrs. Craig O. McCaw, Mr. and Mrs. James R. Moffett, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Neubauer, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Scott, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Dennis R. Washington, and Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Welters.

Additionally, special thanks are offered to Association Members Wally Amos, Maya Angelou, John O. Hershey, Art Linkletter, Colin L. Powell, John Silber, Arthur E. Turner, and Venita VanCaspel Harris for their guidance in the development of these reports. The Association would also like to express its gratitude to educational analyst Jennifer M. Park, author of this report, and Vicki Baker, Associate Superintendent of North Kansas City School District in Missouri, for her analysis of the survey.

Our thanks and appreciation go to the students who participated in the press conference panel: Norman de Veyra from Livermore High School in California, Jennifer L. Duke from Pearl High School in Mississippi, Maya Isaac from Rolla High School in Missouri, Andrew J. Lessard from Westbrook High School in Maine, Shanika S. Wilson from Trinity High School in Texas, and Mary Stafford from Giles High School in Virginia.

INTRODUCTION

For a half century, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans has been listening to the nation's young people—listening to their hopes and fears and trying to replace their worries with dreams and aspirations.

Founded in 1947, the Horatio Alger Association was created to demonstrate that the American dream is a truly attainable goal for all citizens who, through hard work, honesty, and determination, can overcome any obstacles. The Association reaffirms this critically important goal each year by identifying outstanding role models whose lives are characterized by great success, triumph over adversity, and an abiding commitment to help others.

One such initiative, made possible through the continuing generosity of its Members, is the Association's National Scholars Program. Each year, this program awards more than $1 million in college scholarships to promising high school seniors who, like the Association's Members, have confronted and vanquished some of life's most forbidding roadblocks.

This report, *The State of Our Nation's Youth*, represents another of our organization's efforts to hear what is in the hearts and minds of young people. In publishing this annual back–to–school survey, we hope to give voice to our teenagers' thoughts and opinions. Our youth have much to say, and if we are to be the compassionate and thoughtful guardians of their best interests, we must understand and appreciate their concerns, motivations, expectations, and opinions.

The Association is committed to providing the annual *State of Our Nation's Youth* report to the educational community. We will release the results of the first of a four–year comparative report in the year 2000. We hope you find this information useful in working with our nation's youth.

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FOREWORD

I am pleased to write a foreword again this year for this important and ongoing series of reports. *The State of Our Nation's Youth* provides a unique vantage point for assessing the health and wellbeing of our country's youth. Most national studies focus on counting health-compromising behaviors among adolescents, focusing on such issues as violence, alcohol use, other drug use, or school failure. These are important barometers, of course. *The State of Our Nation's Youth* utilizes a different set of indicators which we at Search Institute call thriving outcomes or the positive behaviors, perspectives, and values which deserve to be promoted. Hence, the focus is on such issues as safety, aspirations, connection, belonging, role models, and family. *The State of Our Nation's Youth* series, including this 1999-2000 report, help all of us stretch our imagination to both intuit a broader understanding of the signs of health as well as our roles, personally and collectively, in helping youth move toward these positive outcomes.

Several results in this study are particularly encouraging. As I noted in the foreword to last year's report, most youth report that they are positively connected to the two major social institutions charged with promoting positive human development: family and school. Most youth continue to view parents as significant sources of support. Contrary to popular mythology about parent-child conflict, the 1999-2000 report shows that the majority of boys and girls affirm that they talk to, get along with, and respect their fathers and mothers. One particularly positive trend is that adolescent boys are more likely in 1999-2000 to be in positive relationships with their fathers than they were in 1998-99.

And when asked to assess their schools, most teenagers provide ratings of "A" or "B." The percentage so rating their schools stands at 66%, exactly the same as in 1998-99. I find it particularly compelling that most teenagers report that schools provide caring and concerned administrators and teachers. Ninety percent report "there is at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about my success." And 78% say "there is at least one teacher or administrator who is always available when needed."

There is additional data, however, which signal a need for improvement. Forty-three percent of students perceive that cheating is commonplace in schools. The average amount of time spent on homework seems to be on the decline, moving from 6.6 hours in 1997 to 6.1 hours in 1998 to 5.9 hours in 1999. The proportion of students who always feel safe in their school dropped to 37% in 1999 from 44% in 1998.

It is tempting to hold only schools accountable for these findings. That would be shortsighted. The data on cheating, homework and safety represent, I believe, larger cultural themes about values and priorities which get played out in schools. Improving these kinds of indicators requires more than school energy. It also requires stronger attentiveness to positive development by many sectors within community.

In a time of rapid social change—as this certainly is—we need to be particularly attentive to connecting our youth to safe and engaging "places to be," particularly in the gap periods between school and the return of parent or parents from the workplace. One of the most important indices in this report is the percent of youth that participate in clubs, teams, and organizations (e.g., athletics, music and other areas of artistic expression, student government, service groups, and science clubs). In 1999, 77% report participation in at least one of these activities. That's the good news. But the rate is down from that reported in 1998 (82%). I suggest we watch this trend closely and that we do all in our power to reverse it.

This 1999-2000 report is particularly timely. In the past months, tragic violence in our schools has galvanized American citizens to look deeply at who we are as a society and what can be done to grow healthy, engaged, and connected youth. This 1999-2000 *State of Our Nation's Youth* report provides insight and direction for helping us vision the kind of developmentally-attentive society all youth need.

Dr. Peter L. Benson

Dr. Benson is a Social Psychologist, Author of *All Kids are Our Kids*, and President of Search Institute in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The table below summarizes the major survey findings.

AT A GLANCE

	TOTAL 1997	TOTAL 1998	TOTAL 1999	DIFFERENCE
SCHOOLS				
Give their schools an "A" or "B"	73%	66%	66%	0%
Agree that courses school offers are preparing them for the future.	na	**69%**	64%	-5%
Agree that courses their school offers are challenging	na	**60%**	55%	-5%
Believe that it is important to most of their teachers that they do their best.	na	68%	63%	-5%
Have at least one teacher or administrator to to talk with about personal problems	na	66%	63%	-3%
STUDENT ENVIRONMENT				
Always feel safe in their school	na	**44%**	37%	-7%
Believe teachers and administrators have taken all necessary steps to make them feel safe and secure	na	**43%**	35%	-8%
Feel that the behavior of other students in their school interferes with their performance	na	40%	38%	-2%
COURSES IMPORTANT FOR FUTURE SUCCESS				
Computer courses	93%	91%	93%	2%
Mathematics	92%	92%	93%	1%
English	92%	90%	89%	-1%
Business	**84%**	78%	**83%**	**5%**
Science	**87%**	79%	79%	0%
ATTITUDES				
Try to take the most difficult and challenging courses they can	na	52%	48%	-4%
Believe the amount of work they do is very important to later success in life	na	66%	66%	0%
Personally important to them that they do their best in all of their classes	na	73%	72%	-1%
OPPORTUNITIES				
Believe the harder they work the more opportunities will be available to them	na	74%	73%	-1%
Believe they will have many opportunities available after they graduate	na	71%	68%	-3%
Believe there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes	na	58%	55%	-3%
EFFORT AND GRADES				
Received mostly A's on last report card	na	25%	24%	-1%
Homework is a priority; complete before other activities	na	39%	38%	-1%
Mean number of hours of homework per week	6.6	6.1	5.9	-0.2

Note: Bold red figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level

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At A Glance (continued)	TOTAL 1997	TOTAL 1998	TOTAL 1999	DIFFERENCE
ROLE MODELS				
Role model is family member	na	41%	41%	0%
FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS				
Mother is a person they can confide in about personal problems	na	69%	69%	0%
Father is a person they can confide in about personal problems	na	41%	43%	2%
OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES				
Have a group of friends they hang out with	na	64%	67%	3%
Had a job in past school year	na	38%	39%	1%
Participated in athletic teams or clubs	76% participated in some type of activity	**51%**	46%	-5%
Participated in band/orchestra		17%	19%	2%
TOP CAREER CHOICES				
Business person	6%	6%	7%	1%
Teacher	6%	8%	6%	-2%
Medical doctor	7%	7%	6%	-1%
Computer hardware/software developer	4%	7%	5%	-2%
Engineer	5%	6%	5%	-1%
THE FUTURE				
Percentage planning to continue their education	na	82%	79%	-3%
Percentage planning to attend a four-year college or university	62%	61%	58%	-3%
Top reason for seeking further education after high school is to get a good job	Ranked #1	38%	39%	1%
Top reason for seeking further education is to have the ability to make a difference/change things for the better	na	19%	19%	0%
Ideal age for marriage	24.4	25.5	25.3	-0.2
Number of children desired (includes those who do not want children)	2.2	2.0	2.1	0.1

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level*

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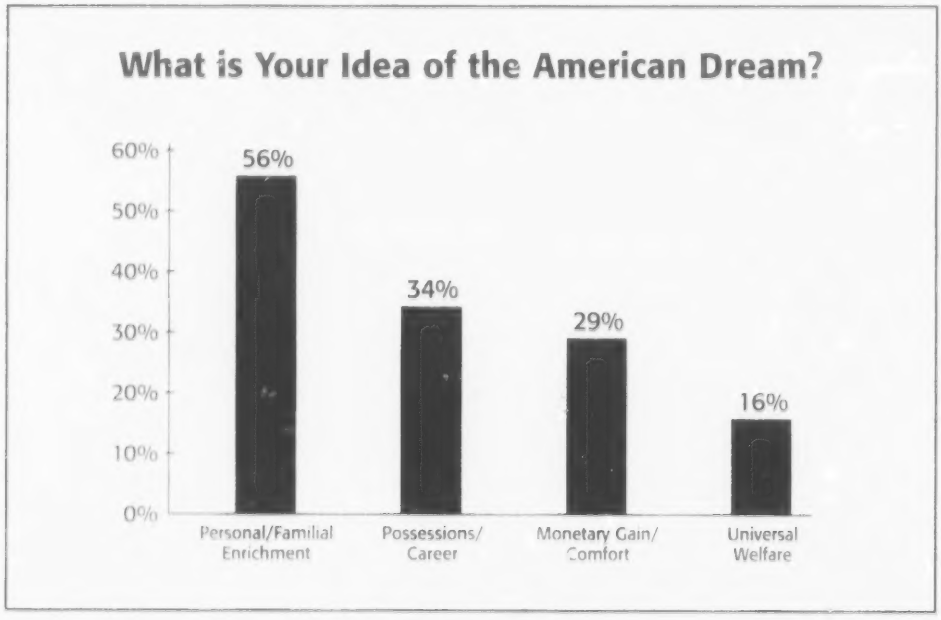
FINDINGS

THE AMERICAN DREAM

Today's youth expect to have it all—work and career, personal fulfillment, and family and friends. Most want more than personal or material success, hoping to make a difference and to contribute to society. When asked if various aspects of their lives were critical to their future success, nearly all agreed that their work or career and personal growth were important. Most listed friendships and immediate family, indicating that today's students expect to combine a career with personal development and raising children. Marriage and family continue to be extremely important to today's students. In fact, high school students in 1999 rated an extended family as important more frequently than making a contribution to society. Over two-thirds also listed religious or spiritual activities as important to their personal success.

What students want in their personal lives mirrors their concept of the American dream. When students were asked to define the American dream, over half listed aspects of personal or familial enrichment, including having their emotional needs and desires fulfilled, happiness and success, family, and freedom of choice. Possessions and monetary gain comprised the next tier of the dream. Many students also listed aspects of universal welfare such as happiness, peace, and harmony for all people.



A SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY

High school students continue to express a keen sense of personal opportunity, with over two-thirds (69%) believing they will have many personal opportunities after they graduate. African Americans responded affirmatively in greater proportions than other races to the statement that the harder they worked, the more opportunities would be available, with 82% of African Americans agreeing that this statement was true compared with 71% of Caucasians and 68% of students from other minority groups.

Although today's teens have a strong perception of their personal opportunities, they do not necessarily agree that students of all races and social backgrounds possess the same degree of opportunity. When asked if there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes, 60% of Caucasians agreed that there is, compared with only 40% of African Americans and 41% of students of other races and backgrounds.

Teens' awareness of personal opportunity may not be matched by a corresponding desire to put the maximum effort into their schoolwork. All measures of effort and striving showed declines of between 1% and 4% in 1999, with females generally posting greater declines than males.

VIEWING THE WORLD AROUND THEM

When asked to name the greatest problem facing the United States today, teens again named crime and violence. However, the proportion of teens listing crime and violence jumped markedly from 30% in 1998 to 40% in 1999. There were no significant differences among students of different races in the perception that crime and violence is the number one problem. However, students whose family incomes were below $30,000 a year were more likely than those whose incomes exceeded $50,000 to name crime and violence as the number one problem.

The number two problem—the decline of family, moral, and social values—was listed in about the same proportion as 1998. Drugs and AIDS were the next most frequently named problems, as they were in 1998. However, this year racial tension and discrimination moved into fifth place from sixth place in 1998, with 8% of students selecting this as the nation's greatest problem. Terrorism was also more likely to be named as a problem this year, with more than 9% of students selecting either domestic terrorism, chemical and biological warfare, or international terrorism as the nation's most pressing problem.

THEIR FUTURE

As today's teens look to the year ahead—either to a new school year or to life on their own—they expressed concerns revolving around personal accomplishments, academic goals, and their future role in society. Again this year, students were asked to state "their biggest problem or challenge, if any, during the next year." Students were asked to write in their answers, and their responses were then classified into major categories: personal accomplishments and goals, academics, and career choice.

Personal accomplishments were listed more frequently overall than were academic concerns (41% vs. 37%), reversing last year's priorities. Although maintaining grades and GPA remained the number one concern of this year's class, the proportion listing an academic-related concern dropped in 1999. Concern with academics varied by region, with students from the New England states the most focused on academic goals and students from the East South Central and Mountain states the least concerned with academics. Students from the East South Central states were the most focused on personal goals. (See map of U.S. Census regions.)

In their personal lives, students were focused on financial arrangements, getting along with peers and family, and adjusting to a new environment or school situation. Students also expressed concerns about finding work and selecting a career.

CONTINUING THEIR EDUCATION

Although the proportion of students who plan to attend a four-year college or university dropped slightly this year (61% in 1998 vs. 58% in 1999), most students do plan to continue their education in some fashion. The proportion of females planning to attend a four-year college or university continued to exceed that of males—62% vs. 54%. Male and female teens were equally likely to state that they plan to attend a two-year college or get a job. Males were somewhat more likely than females to plan to attend a training or vocational school or join the military, while females were more likely to state that they plan to get married or to join a volunteer organization.

About four out of ten students this year agreed that their chief motivating factor in seeking further education is to get a job or to get a well-paying job. Getting a good job continued to be more motivating for males than females.

This year, the Horatio Alger Association investigated how students plan for and expect to pay for their college education. When asked if they had started planning for how to pay for their college education, about two-thirds of students indicated that they had. Students were then asked what they expected the total cost of their first year at college to be, including tuition, books, and room and board. Less than one-quarter of students stated that they thought the cost would be below $5,000 a year (corresponding to community colleges and some state colleges), and about a quarter said the cost would be at least $20,000 a year. Another 22% of students expected the cost to be somewhere between $10,000 and $14,999 for their first year.

In general, students indicated that they are planning to finance their education from a variety of sources, including scholarships, parental contributions, outside jobs, and student loans. Two-thirds of female students compared with 56% of male students plan on financing college through scholarships; similarly, a greater proportion of females than males expect to get grants. Caucasians were more likely than students of other racial backgrounds to expect to work at a job outside of school to finance their education, while African Americans expect more scholarships and grants than students of other races.

THEIR FUTURE CAREERS

This year's teens selected business as the number one career they intend to pursue. Business careers outranked careers in both teaching and medicine (as a medical doctor). However, the profile of top-ranked careers varied somewhat between the genders and among students of different races. Female teens selected teaching, medicine, and psychology as their top careers, followed closely by business and nursing. The top three careers selected by male teens were computer software development, engineering, and business, followed by military service and a career as a mechanic. Students' top five career choices differed by race as well. While Caucasian choices mirrored the overall top five selections, African Americans selected business, medicine, law, military service, and professional sports as the top five careers, while students of other races selected business, computer hardware development, computer software development, engineering, and teaching as their top five choices.

Students' salary expectations for their first job did not change significantly from 1998, but this year, females lagged slightly behind males in expected earnings on their first job. The largest group of students (26%) expects to make between $25,000-$34,000 on their first job. While 47% of males expect their starting salary to be at least $35,000, only 37% of females have this expectation.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

Students indicated that 25 was the ideal age for marriage, although for males, the ideal age was closer to 26. On average, females who do want children want 2.5, compared with 2.2 for males. When students who do not want children are averaged in, the average is closer to 2.0 children.

THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

When asked to give their schools a grade, two-thirds of today's teens (66%) rated their schools either an A or B, exactly matching the 1998 proportion, but this is less than in 1997 when 73% of students rated their school highly. The proportion of students giving their schools an "A" rating dropped from 19% in 1998 to 17% in 1999. This grade drop was driven primarily by public school students—17% of whom gave their schools a rating of "A" in 1998 compared with 14% in 1999. Private school students actually were more likely to award their schools an "A" rating in 1999 than in 1998—36% vs. 34%.

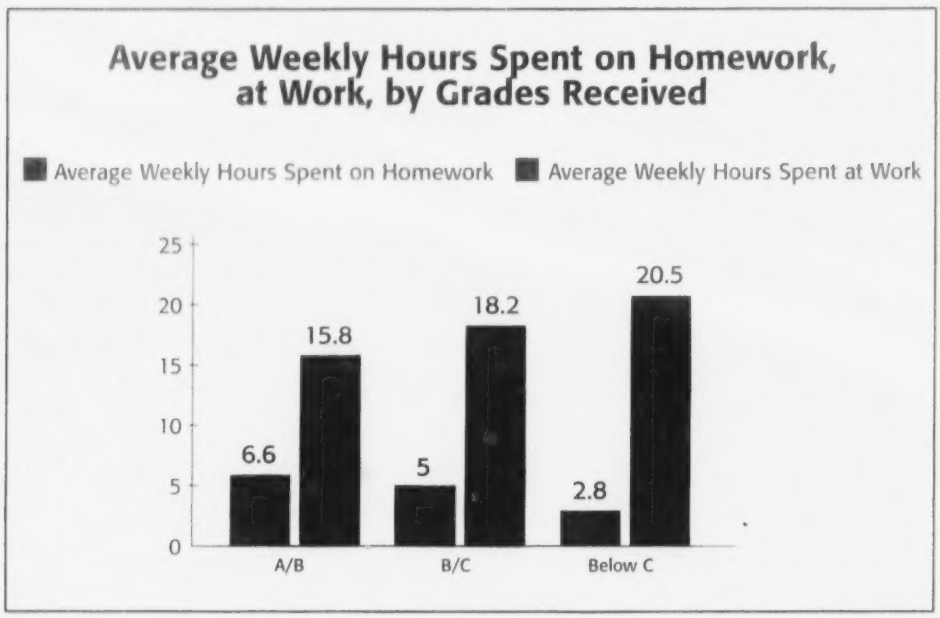
PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE

When asked whether they believe students receive a better education in a public or private school, the vast majority of students stated that they believe they can receive a good education in either type of school. Over one-quarter of students believe that students receive a better education in a private school and 16% of students believe they receive a better education in a public school. Two-thirds of students currently attending private schools (who comprise about 11% of the total student population) believe they receive a better education in a private school. Only one-fifth of students in public schools believe that private schools are superior.

When asked if they would prefer to attend a public or private college, four out of ten students had no preference, with about three out of ten preferring a public college and three out of ten preferring a private college. Students currently attending a private high school were much more likely than public school students to want to attend a private college.

GRADES

Nearly one-quarter of students received mostly A's on their report card this year. Over twice as many females as males received mostly A's—33% vs. 16%. Of students who received all A's and B's, 57% studied 5 hours a week or more. Only 40% of students who received B and C grades studied 5 hours a week or more and only 28% of students whose grades averaged below a C studied at least 5 hours a week. At the same time, 43% of those who received all A's and B's studied less than 4 hours a week.



COURSE RATINGS

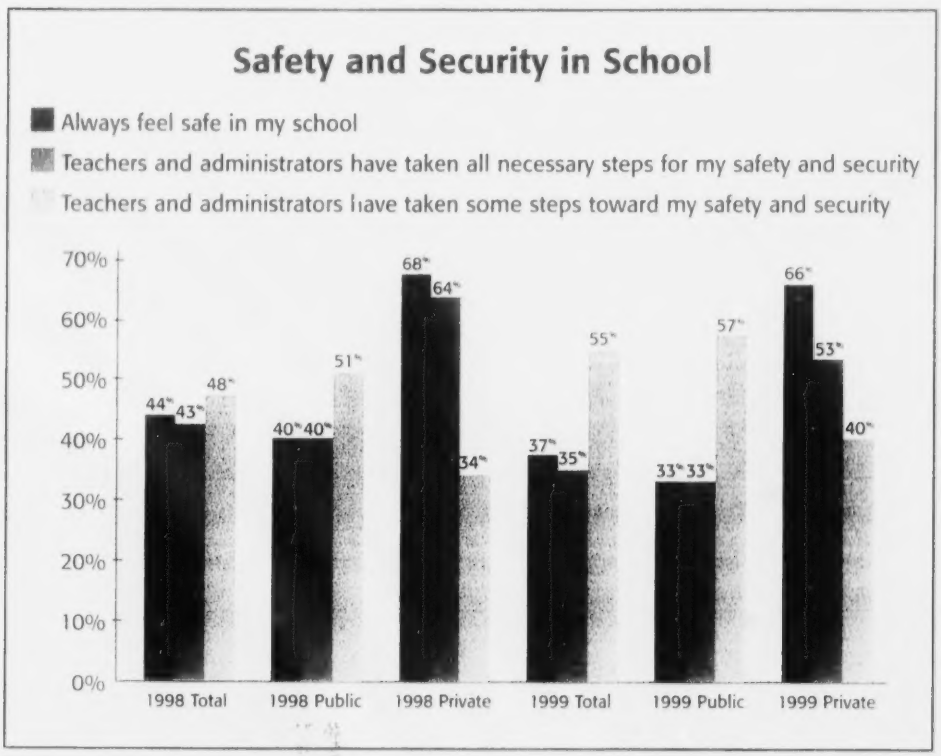
Students gave lower ratings to the quality of their coursework this year than last. In 1998, 69% of students felt that their courses were definitely preparing them for the future, compared with only 64% in 1999. Students were also less likely to find their courses challenging this year and slightly less likely to find them interesting. About the same proportion of students (slightly more than one-third) felt their courses were exciting and about two-thirds experienced the opportunity for open discussion in their classes. This year, female teens felt that their courses were more interesting and exciting than did males, but were not significantly different from males in feeling that the courses challenged them or prepared them for the future.

Computer usage/programming slightly edged out mathematics as the course rated as important by most teens. Students appeared to consider relevance to a future job as the most important factor in their ratings.

English continued to be the third ranked subject, though ranked second by females. Rankings did change slightly this year, with business/commercial courses rated higher than science, and government moving ahead of sex/health education.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The proportion of students who always feel safe in their school dropped significantly from 44% in 1998 to 37% in 1999. The decline was most noticeable in responses from public school students. In 1998, 40% of public school students always felt safe in their schools, contrasted with only 33% of public school students who always felt safe in 1999. The decline was not as dramatic among private school students. When asked if teachers and administrators had taken all necessary steps for safety and security, only 35% of students felt that they had, contrasted with 43% in 1998. Among private school students, this number decreased significantly—from 64% last year to only 53% this year. Most students agreed that teachers and administrators had taken some, but not all, necessary steps to ensure students' safety and security.



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DISCIPLINE

The conduct of other students continues to be a problem for some teens, particularly in public schools. Similar to last year's study, about half of the students indicated that the rules on student conduct are about right, with 18% feeling that they are too lax, and 30% saying they are too strict. Four out of ten public school students indicated that the behavior of other students in their school definitely or somewhat interferes with their performance, compared with 23% of private school students.

TEACHERS' AND ADMINISTRATORS' CARING AND CONCERN

Nine out of ten students indicated that there is at least one teacher who personally cares about their success. More than eight out of ten students could talk to a teacher about their school problems, and more than three-quarters could always find a teacher to talk to when needed. But students were less inclined to feel that it is important to most of their teachers that they do their best (only 63% feel that it is), and 63% can talk to a teacher or administrator about their personal problems. Students in private schools were somewhat more likely to find an available teacher or one they could discuss personal problems with.

THEIR LIVES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

The number of teens participating in any cocurricular activity dropped from 82% in 1998 to 77% in 1999. Participation in athletic teams and clubs fell by 5%, with males and females equally less likely to participate in athletics this year. Females continued to be more likely than males to participate in a school-related activity. Females were also more likely to participate in each individual activity with the exception of band/orchestra (equally popular with males and females) and science clubs (more males than females).

About two-thirds of students have a group of friends they hang out with, leaving one-third with only one or two close friends or no friends at all. This year, 6% of students reported that they spend most of their time alone. Although the proportion of boys preferring to spend their time alone remained the same between 1998 and 1999, the proportion of girls spending time alone rose from 3.5% to 5%.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

To understand student attitudes and behavior in more detail, this year's study examined students who appear to achieve markedly greater or less success than their peers. Although demographic characteristics alone do not predetermine success or failure, those students who were more successful than average in terms of grades, attitudes, and participation in cocurricular activities were more likely to come from two-parent families in which both parents had college degrees and both parents had managerial or professional careers. Parental age (with parents in their 40s rather than their 30s) also corresponded to a greater likelihood of students performing at an above average level.

This year's report looks at the effects of income, family type, and type of school on student achievement in more detail. As in previous studies, it is important to note that membership in a particular demographic group does not determine a student's level of success, but rather that having greater emotional and material assets—such as a two-parent or extended family, adequate income level, and role models for educational and career success—affords an advantage to students as they navigate the school environment.

THE EFFECT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Only 54% of those whose family earned below $30,000 felt that many opportunities would be available to them after they graduated. In contrast, 71% of students from families earning between $30,000 and $49,999 felt that they would have many opportunities. This figure rose to 78% of those with family incomes above $75,000.

Students from families whose incomes were below $30,000 were also less inclined to believe that there is the same amount of opportunity for those of all races and social classes. Compared with those from families earning over $75,000, they were less likely to believe that the harder they work, the more opportunities they will have in life. There is a strong relationship between household income and student effort and striving, with major differences occurring between students from households earning less than $30,000 a year and households earning at least $50,000 a year.

Students from lower income households were less likely to:

★ Take the most difficult and challenging classes they can

★ Believe the amount of work they do now is important to success later in life

★ Believe that it is important that they do the best in all their classes

★ Agree that doing homework is important

FAMILY LIFE

Last year, 87% of male teens could talk to their mothers about day-to-day issues; this year 83% of males responded affirmatively. However, 70% of males compared with 67% last year were able to talk to their fathers about everyday issues. Males continue to get along well with their mothers—83% responded positively both years—but this year, 77% indicated that they get along well with their fathers, a 5% increase from last year. And more males may be sharing family experiences with their fathers, up 6% from last year.

Females, on the other hand, reported somewhat more positive relationships with both their mothers and their fathers than males. This year, 86% of females reported that they were able to talk to their mothers about day-to-day issues (vs. 84% last year) and 59% reported being able to talk to their fathers (vs. 55% last year). Females continue to confide much more in their mothers than fathers.

A ROLE MODEL IN THE FAMILY

Teens continue to look to their family, family friends, and personal friends as role models. When asked which category their current role model would be from, over four out of ten teens listed a family member and 13% listed a friend or family friend, closely matching last year's results. Teachers continued to be popular role models for students, especially for female teens, while sports figures remained popular with male youth. Less than 1% of students selected a political figure as their role model.

THE EFFECT OF TEEN EMPLOYMENT

Although teens study less than 6 hours a week, they spend, on average, over 16 hours a week working at a job. In fact, over 40% of teens spent more than 20 hours a week at work last year. While less than half of teenagers aged 14-15 held jobs, well over half of students aged 16 and older held jobs.

More students with A and B grades held jobs than students with grades below C (40% vs. 29%). More female teens held jobs than male teens even though females put more effort into homework. Students with household incomes between $50,000 and $75,000 were more likely to work than students with household incomes below $30,000.

Students with A or B grades worked an average of about 16 hours per week, somewhat below the mean, while students with grades below C averaged nearly 5 more hours a week at work. Private school students (who logged more study hours and displayed generally more positive attitudes) averaged only 13 hours of work per week compared with 17 hours for public school students.

THE FUTURE

The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans is committed to tracking the pulse of our nation's youth. Annual surveys will be conducted with results released in August of each year. Commencing in the year 2000, the first in a planned series of 4-year comprehensive comparative studies will be conducted. For information about this report or future studies, please contact the Horatio Alger Association.

THE SURVEY

The State of Our Nation's Youth is a survey and analysis of the attitudes and plans of American teenagers as they head into the 1999-2000 school year. In this survey, students between the ages of 14 and 18 are given the opportunity to express their opinions on relevant family, school, and social issues.

NFO Research, the world's third largest custom research firm, conducted the study via self-administered mail questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of a four-page, legal-sized booklet mailed on April 22, 1999 to 2,250 individuals between the ages of 14 and 18. Returned surveys were accepted until May 25, 1999. There was a 59% total return rate (1,327 households returning).

When drafting the survey for this year's project, every effort was made to ensure consistency of wording for questions used for comparison purposes with previous surveys. Because of new issues raised by the 1998 survey, additional questions were incorporated in the 1999 document. The questionnaire was designed so that answers to new questions would have minimal impact on items that were also asked the previous year. Because extensive changes were made between 1997 and 1998, comparisons are made across the three-year span for identically worded questions only.

The sample for the 1999 study was selected from the NFO Research Panel and balanced to 1998 Current Population Survey estimates to be nationally representative of households with a male or female head of household 18 years of age or older and the presence of an individual 14-18 years of age. To permit regional comparisons, the questionnaires were mailed to representative households within each of the nine United States Census regions. The households were selected based on household income, household size, market size, race, household designation (presence of other members in a household), as well as age and gender of the individual teen. One teen in the household, identified by age and gender on the survey document, was randomly selected to complete the survey.

Because the primary focus of the survey is to obtain national-level data, an NFO proprietary weighting procedure was used for data weighting before the data tabulations were done, in order to ensure correct representation of Census regions within the national sample. Reports on subgroup comparisons (i.e. gender, race, family type) are made only when response rates and sample sizes permit.

At the tabulation stage, 94 respondents were eliminated from the basis of the report because they were either home schooled (22) or did not currently attend school (72). Teens were instructed in the materials they received with the questionnaire to return the survey within a given time period. Teens who did not return the questionnaire by the cutoff date were excluded from the sample.

Because of normal sample fluctuations, not all differences between groups or time periods represent true differences in the population. Therefore, significant differences (differences that do reflect population differences) have been noted in this report. Differences that are significant at the .05 level are indicative of greater differences between groups than those significant at only the .10 level. The following section provides tables listing the results discussed in this report.

FINAL SAMPLE

	FINAL SAMPLE	1998 CPS
REGION		
New England	4.5%	4.5%
Mid-Atlantic	14.1%	13.7%
East North Central	16.5%	16.6%
West North Central	7.4%	7.2%
South Atlantic	16.6%	17.1%
East South Central	6.4%	6.6%
West South Central	13.0%	12.7%
Mountain	6.0%	6.4%
Pacific	15.6%	15.3%
HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
<$15,000	11.0%	12.0%
$15,000-$29,999	16.0%	16.6%
$30,000-$49,999	23.1%	23.2%
$50,000-$74,999	23.7%	23.1%
$75,000 and above	26.2%	25.1%
HOUSEHOLD SIZE		
2 members	7.9%	7.9%
3 members	24.5%	24.2%
4 members	35.1%	34.6%
5+ members	32.5%	33.2%
RACE		
Caucasian	80.4%	80.0%
African-American	14.9%	15.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.7%	3.6%
American Indian/Eskimo	1.0%	1.0%
HOUSEHOLD DESIGNATION		
Husband/Wife	68.2%	67.1%
Male/Relative	6.0%	6.3%
Female/Relative	23.9%	24.7%
Male/Non-Relative	1.3%	1.3%
Female/Non-Relative	0.6%	0.6%
AGE		
14 years	20.4%	20.2%
15 years	21.5%	20.5%
16 years	20.9%	20.2%
17 years	20.5%	20.4%
18 years	16.6%	18.7%

Note: CPS – Current Population Survey

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DATA TABLES

DATA TABLES

In many cases, students were allowed to select more than one response. For tables in which more than one response was given, the proportions will not add up to 100%. In some cases, students contributed multiple responses when only one response was requested. This information was also preserved in the tables, causing proportions to total to more than 100%

Individual items may not total 100% due to rounding. Whole number percents were rounded from decimal percents using the following guidelines: Decimals greater than or equal to .5 were rounded up. Decimals less than .5 were rounded down.

IMPORTANT TO PERSONAL SUCCESS

(% Agree/Agree Strongly)

	Total 1998	Total 1999
Work and career	98%	99%
Personal development and satisfaction	97%	97%
Friendships	94%	95%
Immediate family	92%	94%
Extended family	75%	**79%**
Make a contribution to society	76%	76%
Religious/spiritual activities	68%	68%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (1998 vs. 1999)*

A SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males	Females	Caucasian	African American	Other Races
The harder I work, the more opportunities will be available to me.	74%	73%	72%	73%	71%	**82%**	68%
I will have many opportunities available to me after I graduate.	71%	68%	65%	**72%**	70%	64%	71%
I feel that there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes.	58%	55%	54%	56%	**60%**	40%	41%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (Caucasians vs. African Americans and other races)*

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DEGREE OF EFFORT AND CHALLENGE

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
I try to take the most difficult and challenging courses I can.	52%	48%	42%	**54%**
The amount of work I do in school now is important to my success later in life.	66%	66%	60%	**72%**
It is important to me that I do my best in all my classes.	73%	72%	64%	**80%**
Doing homework is a priority for me. I complete it before participating in other activities.	39%	38%	29%	**47%**

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (males vs. females)*

GREATEST NATIONAL PROBLEMS

The Top Ten	Total 1998	Total 1999
Crime/Violence	30%	**40%**
Decline of Family, Moral and Social Values	23%	22%
Drugs	17%	16%
AIDS	**15%**	10%
Racial Tension/Discrimination	6%	8%
Environmental Pollution/Deterioration	7%	6%
Poverty/Unemployment	5%	5%
Health Care	3%	4%
Domestic Tension	below 3%	3%
Chemical and Biological Warfare	3%	3%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (1999 vs. 1998)*

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GREATEST PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE DURING THE NEXT YEAR

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
ACADEMICS	**43%**	**37%**	**36%**	**38%**
Achieving and maintaining good grades or a good GPA, keeping up in class	25%	26%	27%	25%
Graduating/completing school year	7%	6%	4%	**7%**
Selecting a college	5%	3%	2%	**5%**
Acceptance into college or college of choice	3%	3%	3%	3%
Choosing a curriculum	2%	2%	1%	2%
PERSONAL GOALS	**40%**	**41%**	**38%**	
Financial arrangements	6%	7%	9%*	6%
Getting along with peers or family	8%	7%	7%	7%
Adjusting to new school/environment	6%	7%	5%	8%
Adjusting to college	6%	6%	5%	**8%**
Time management	6%	5%	3%	**8%**
Other comments on self-improvement	5%	5%	5%	5%
Excel/participate in sports/athletic activities	5%	3%	3%	2%
Transportation/mobility	3%	2%	2%	2%
CAREER	**10%**	**10%**	**9%**	**10%**
Finding/working at a job	7%	5%	6%	4%
Selecting a career or career goal	4%	4%	3%	5%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (male vs. female)*

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

Responses below 1% are not included in this table.

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PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
Attend four-year college or university	61%	58%	54%	**62%**
Attend two-year college	14%	16%	16%	16%
Attend a training or vocation school	11%	10%	13%	7%
Get a job	31%	29%	29%	29%
Get married	6%	8%	5%	**11%**
Join the armed forces	8%	8%	**12%**	4%
Join a volunteer organization	3%	2%	1%	**4%**
Travel	9%	9%	8%	10%
Undecided	12%	13%	15%	12%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (males vs. females)*

GREATEST MOTIVATING FACTOR FOR SEEKING FURTHER EDUCATION

(Based on those planning to attend college or training/vocational school)

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
A mechanism to getting a job/well-paying job	38%	39%	**47%**	31%
To have the ability to make a difference/ change things for the better	19%	19%	11%	**27%**
Independence	13%	13%	12%	15%
More options becoming available	12%	12%	13%	11%
Self-enrichment	6%	7%	5%	**8%**
A mechanism to getting further education	6%	6%	7%	5%
Following the footsteps of someone I admire	4%	3%	3%	3%
Family acceptance or pressures	2%	2%	2%	3%
Social status or acceptance	2%	2%	3%	2%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*

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HAVE STARTED PLANNING FOR HOW TO PAY FOR COLLEGE EDUCATION

	Have Started
TOTAL	66%
TYPE OF FAMILY	
Nuclear	**66%**
Single parent	54%
Step	59%
Extended	**64%**
SCHOOL TYPE	
Public school	65%
Private school	74%*
GRADES IN SCHOOL	
A/B	**72%**
B/C	54%
Below C	40%
RACE	
Caucasian	65%
African-American	63%
Other races	76%*

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*
**Significantly different at the .10 level*

EXPECTED TOTAL COST OF FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE

	Total	Public	Private	Caucasian	African American	Other Races
Under $3,000	13%	**14%**	3%	12%	18%	11%
$3,000-$4,999	10%	11%*	5%	10%	10%	7%
$5,000-$6,999	12%	13%	9%	12%	17%	10%
$7,000-$9,999	7%	7%	9%	7%	9%	1%
$10,000-$14,999	22%	23%	24%	22%	23%	26%
$15,000-$19,999	11%	11%	14%	13%	7%	4%
$20,000-$49,999	22%	20%	**33%**	21%	14%	**37%**
$50,000 and over	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	4%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*
**Significantly different at the .10 level*

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WAYS IN WHICH EXPECT TO FINANCE COSTS OF COLLEGE EDUCATION

	Total	Males	Females	Caucasian	African American	Other Races
Scholarships	61%	56%	**66%**	59%	**71%**	68%
Parents are paying	51%	51%	52%	53%	43%	49%
A job outside of school	49%	47%	51%	**52%**	40%	42%
Student loans	46%	43%	49%	46%	50%	38%
Grants	38%	34%	**41%**	34%	**52%**	46%*
Student sponsored job	13%	12%	15%	12%	18%	17%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*
**Significantly different at the .10 level*

TOP TEN 1999 CAREER CHOICES

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
Business	6%	7%	**8%**	7%
Teaching	8%	6%	3%	**10%**
Medical Doctor	7%	6%	4%	**9%**
Computer software development	4%	5%	**8%**	3%
Engineering	6%	5%	**8%**	1%
Art	3%	4%	5%*	3%
Music	3%	4%	4%	4%
Law	4%	4%	3%	5%
Psychology	3%	4%	1%	**7%**
Military Service	3%	3%	**6%**	1%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*
**Significantly different at the .10 level*

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WHAT SALARY DO YOU EXPECT TO EARN PER YEAR WHEN YOU BEGIN YOUR CAREER?

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Male 1998	Male 1999	Female 1998	Female 1999
Under $15,000	7%	8%	7%	7%	6%	8%
$15,000-$24,999	23%	24%	21%	22%	25%	26%
$25,000-$34,999	30%	26%	30%	24%	29%	28%
$35,000-$49,999	22%	24%	22%	26%*	21%	21%
$50,000-$74,999	11%	11%	13%	13%	10%	10%
$75,000 or more	8%	7%	8%	8%	8%	6%

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
Ideal age for marriage	25.5	25.3	**25.9**	24.7
Number of children would like (based on those who do want children)	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.5
Number of children would like (including those who do not want children)	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.2

Note: Bold red figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (males vs. females)

HOW STUDENTS GRADE THEIR SCHOOLS' OVERALL PERFORMANCE

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Public 1999	Private 1999
A	19%	17%	14%	**37%**
B	47%	49%	49%	50%
C	27%	26%	**29%**	9%
D	5%	6%	6%	3%
F	2%	2%	2%	1%

Note: Bold red figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (public vs. private)

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STUDENT OPINION OF PUBLIC VS PRIVATE EDUCATION

	Total	Public	Private
Receive better education in a public school	16%	**18%**	5%
Receive better education in a private school	26%	20%	**65%**
Can receive good education in either type of school	58%	63%	30%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*

TYPE OF COLLEGE WOULD PREFER TO ATTEND

	Would prefer to attend public college or university	Would prefer to attend private college or university	Have no preference for college or university type (public or private)
Total	**31%**	**29%**	**40%**
Public	**34%**	25%	41%
Private	9%	**58%**	33%
Grades A/B	28%	31%	41%
Grades B/C	33%	28%	39%
Grades Below C	**50%**	18%	32%
Caucasian	30%	30%	39%
African American	35%	25%	40%
Other Races	26%	31%	43%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*

CHEATING BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOLS

	Believe no or few students cheat	Believe half or most students cheat
Total 1998	54%	46%
Total 1999	57%	43%
Males 1999	63%	37%
Females 1999	50%	50%
Caucasian	57%	43%
African American	57%	43%
Other Races	53%	47%
Public School Students	54%	46%
Private School Students	73%	27%

Note: Bold red figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (males vs. females; public vs. private)

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CHALLENGING COURSES, HOMEWORK, AND GRADES: SELF-REPORTED

	Percent Taking Most Difficult and Challenging Courses	Mean Number of Homework Hours Per Week	Percent Receiving Mostly A's on Last Report Card
TOTAL	**48%**	**5.9**	**24%**
Male	42%	5.3	16%
Female	54%	6.5	33%
Caucasian	47%	5.7	27%
African American	49%	6.1	7%
Other	53%	7.5	27%
Public school student	48%	5.6	24%
Private school student	52%	7.6	26%

AMOUNT OF WORK REQUIRED BY TEACHERS AND PARENTS

	Not Enough	About Right	Too Much
Amount of work required by teachers	7%	54%	39%
Amount of work required by parents	16%	57%	27%

QUALITY OF COURSES

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
Courses are definitely preparing me for the future	**69%**	64%	63%	65%
Courses are very challenging	**60%**	55%	55%	54%
Courses are very interesting	51%	49%	44%	**53%**
Courses are very exciting	36%	35%	32%	**39%**
Have opportunity for open discussion in my classes	68%	66%	64%	68%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (1999 vs. 1998; males vs. females)*

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RATINGS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF COURSES

(% Very, Somewhat Important)

Rank In 1998	Rank In 1999		Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
2	1	Computer Usage/ Programming	91.2%	93.2%	93.6%	92.8%
1	2	Mathematics	91.5%	92.6%	93.9%	91.2%
3	3	English	89.6%	89.2%	86.7%	**91.8%**
5	4	Business/Commercial	78.3%	**83.2%**	84.6%	81.7%
4	5	Science	78.7%	78.9%	79.5%	78.2%
8	6	Government	64.6%	**70.4%**	68.8%	72.0%
6	7	Sex Education/ Health Education	66.5%	70.0%	67.6%	72.4%
7	8	Family Living/ Home Economics	64.9%	67.8%	59.8%	**76.1%**
9	9	History/Social Studies	61.9%	65.0%	65.6%	64.4%
10	10	Foreign Languages	57.2%	**62.0%**	53.9%	**70.7%**
11	11	Physical Education	53.7%	54.2%	**58.4%**	49.8%
12	12	Vocational	52.5%	54.1%	**68.0%**	39.2%
13	13	Religion	50.8%	51.5%	49.3%	53.8%
15	14	Art	34.2%	**38.2%**	36.9%	39.5%
14	15	Music	34.5%	38.1%	34.8%	**41.5%**
16	16	Drama	20.5%	23.6%	18.0%	**29.5%**

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (1999 vs. 1998; males vs. females)*

AMOUNT OF SAFETY/SECURITY IN SCHOOL

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Public 1999	Private 1999
Always feel safe in my school	**44%**	37%	33%	**66%**
Teachers and administrators have taken all necessary steps for my safety and security	**43%**	35%	33%	**53%**
Teachers and administrators have taken some steps toward my safety and security	48%	**55%**	**57%**	40%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (1999 vs. 1998; public vs. private)*

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CONCERN AND AVAILABILITY OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Public 1999	Private 1999
There is at least one teacher or administrator who personally cares about my success	89%	90%	90%	94%
There is at least one teacher or administrator I can talk with about my school problems	84%	82%	81%	84%
There is at least one teacher or administrator who is always available when needed	78%	78%	77%	85%*
It is important to most of my teachers that I do my best	**68%**	63%	62%	**72%**
There is at least one teacher or administrator I can talk with about my personal problems	66%	63%	61%	70%*

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (1999 vs. 1998; public vs. private)*

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

PARTICIPATION IN COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
Athletic Team/Clubs	**51%**	46%	**51%**	41%
Band/orchestra	17%	19%	19%	21%
Service/volunteer groups	23%	20%	12%	**27%**
Honor societies	21%	19%	13%	**26%**
Choir/choral groups	15%	15%	7%	**24%**
Drama/theatre	12%	13%	9%	**17%**
Student council/government	11%	11%	9%[3]	**14%**
Career-oriented clubs	12%	10%	8%	**13%**
School publications	11%	10%	7%	**15%**
Language clubs	12%	10%	6%	**15%**
Debate/speech	5%	6%	4%	**9%**
Cheerleading	5%	6%	1%	**12%**
Science clubs	5%	5%	6%*	4%
Participate in any activity	**82%**	77%	73%	**81%**

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (1999 vs. 1998; males vs. females)*

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

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TEENS' SOCIAL LIFE

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
Have a group of friends I hang out with	64%	67%	66%	67%
Only hang out with one or two close friends	31%	28%	27%	28%
Prefer to spend most of my time alone	5%	6%	6%	5%

SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	Total	Under $30,000	$30,000-$49,999	$50,000-$74,999	$75,000 and over
The harder I work the more opportunities will be available to me.	73%	67%	74%	75%	74%
I will have many opportunities available to me after I graduate.	68%	54%*	71%	72%	78%
I feel that there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes.	55%	48%	55%	56%	62%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

AMOUNT OF EFFORT PERSONALLY PUT INTO SCHOOL WORK BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	Total	Under $30,000	$30,000-$49,999	$50,000-$74,999	$75,000 and over
I try to take the most difficult and challenging classes I can.	48%	39%	41%	57%	56%
The amount of work I do in school now is very important to my success later on in life.	66%	59%	61%	70%	73%
It is personally important to me that I do my best in all my classes.	72%	63%	68%	78%	77%
It is important to most of my teachers that I do my best.	63%	64%	59%	66%	63%
Doing homework is a priority for me, I complete it before participating in other activities.	38%	34%	32%	42%	44%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

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SENSE OF OPPORTUNITY BY FAMILY TYPE

	Total	Nuclear	Single Parent	Step	Extended
The harder I work the more opportunities will be available to me.	73%	72%	66%	66%	73%
I will have many opportunities available to me after I graduate.	68%	69%	55%	62%	68%
I feel that there is the same amount of opportunity for students of all races and social classes.	55%	55%	50%	51%	59%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

AMOUNT OF EFFORT PERSONALLY PUT INTO SCHOOL WORK BY FAMILY TYPE

	Total	Nuclear	Single Parent	Step	Extended
I try to take the most difficult and challenging classes I can.	48%	49%	38%	35%	47%
The amount of work I do in school now is very important to my success later on in life.	66%	66%	59%	62%	64%
It is personally important to me that I do my best in all my classes.	72%	72%	63%	66%	72%
It is important to most of my teachers that I do my best.	63%	63%	62%	66%	65%
Doing homework is a priority for me, I complete it before participating in other activities.	38%	38%	34%	35%	40%

*Note: **Bold red** figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level.*

**Significantly different at the .10 level*

Note: Families are defined as follows:

Nuclear family: A family in which student lives with both parents

Stepfamily: A family in which student lives with a stepparent

Single Parent Family: A family in which student lives with only one parent

Extended Family: A family in which student lives with relatives in addition to parents and siblings.

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MALE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

(Based on those living with family member)

	Mother	Father	Brother(s)	Sister(s)	Grand-Parent(s)
Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	83%	70%	45%	43%	44%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	68%	55%	38%	32%	32%
Is a person I get along well with	83%	77%	64%	55%	75%
Is a person who really cares about me	94%	91%	63%	66%	84%
Is a person I share family experiences with	82%	80%	68%	68%	65%
Is a person I like	90%	87%	76%	72%	83%
Is a person I respect	89%	90%	57%	56%	92%

Note: Because of differing family configurations, these numbers have not been statistically tested.

FEMALE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

(Based on those living with family member)

	Mother	Father	Brother(s)	Sister(s)	Grand-Parent(s)
Is a person I can talk to about day-to-day issues	86%	59%	40%	60%	43%
Is a person I can confide in about my personal problems	70%	30%	23%	48%	27%
Is a person I get along well with	79%	68%	58%	66%	64%
Is a person who really cares about me	95%	88%	67%	75%	81%
Is a person I share family experiences with	84%	73%	67%	75%	61%
Is a person I like	90%	80%	77%	80%	79%
Is a person I respect	92%	82%	56%	64%	81%

Note: Because of differing family configurations, these numbers have not been statistically tested.

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IF YOU COULD PICK ONE PERSON TO BE YOUR ROLE MODEL, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES WOULD YOUR ROLE MODEL BE IN?

	Total 1998	Total 1999	Males 1999	Females 1999
Family member	41%	41%	39%	44%
Friends/family friend	14%	13%	11%	15%
Teaching/education	11%	10%	7%	14%
Sports/sports-related	10%	9%	14%	3%
Entertainment industry	5%	6%	7%	5%
Religious leader	4%	4%	4%	4%
Business leader	2%	1%	1%	1%
National political leader	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	12%	15%	16%	13%

Note: Bold red figures indicate significant differences at the .05 level. (males vs. females; 1999 vs. 1998)

TEENS HOLDING JOBS

	Had Job Last Year	Average Hours
Total	38.6%	16.9
Age and Gender		
Male Teens 14-15	18.9%	11.0
Female Teens 14-15	16.7%	8.5
Male Teens 16-18	51.0%	18.6
Female Teens 16-18	56.4%	18.4
Grades in School		
A/B	40.0%	15.8
B/C	37.6%	18.2
Below C	28.5%	20.5
Type of School		
Public	38.3%	17.0
Private	39.3%	13.0
Income		
Under $30 K	32.4%	19.1
$30 K - $49.9K	39.4%	18.1
$50K - $74.9K	43.9%	15.2
$75K and above	39.5%	15.5
Type of Family		
Nuclear	38.7%	16.7
Single Parent	36.8%	20.3
Step	34.0%	19.3
Extended	42.3%	17.2

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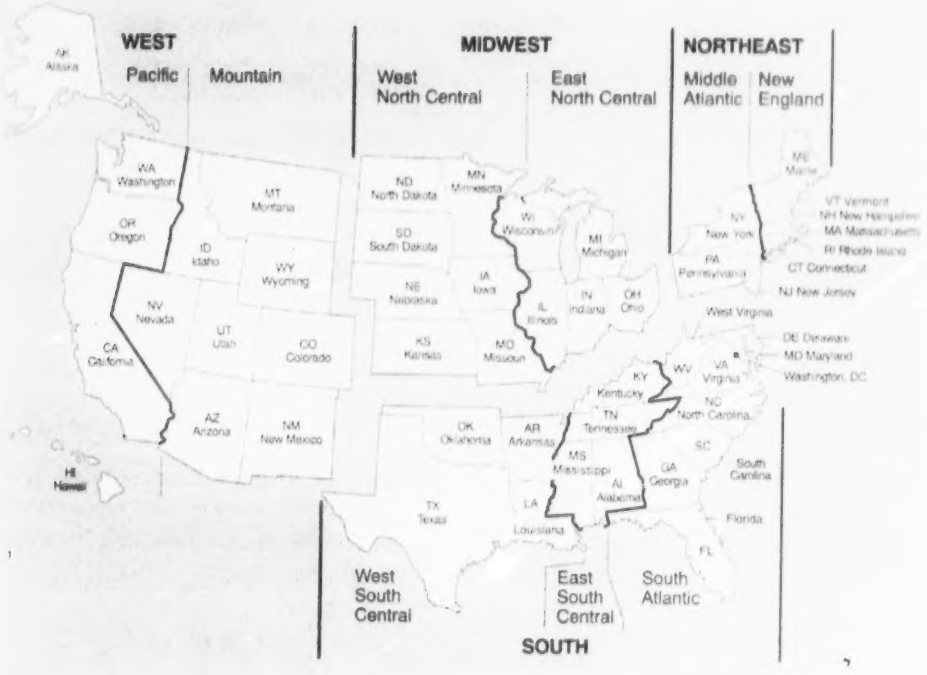
MAP OF U.S. CENSUS REGIONS



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HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION

FACT SHEET

Founded in 1947 to combat a growing attitude among young people that economic opportunity was a thing of the past, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The Association strives to motivate and educate our nation's young people about the economic and personal opportunities afforded them by the promise of the American free enterprise system.

The Association brings the "Horatio Alger heroes" of today together with those of tomorrow by bestowing the Horatio Alger Award annually, hosting Horatio Alger Youth Seminars, sponsoring the National Scholars Conference, awarding more than $1,000,000 annually in grants and college scholarships, and providing a placement service.

MEMBERSHIP

Consisting of more than 500 Horatio Alger Award recipients, the membership represents all walks of American life. Members have made outstanding contributions in the fields of science, medicine, business, entertainment, athletics, law and jurisprudence, religion, education, and the arts.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Horatio Alger Association focuses on recognizing outstanding Americans while providing a critical communication link to motivate and educate America's youth.

The Horatio Alger Award: This honor is presented each year to Americans who serve as role models by excelling professionally in their respective fields and who make significant contributions to improving their communities and their nation.

Horatio Alger National Scholarships and Specialized Grants: More than $1,000,000 in grants and college scholarships are awarded annually to promising secondary school students who have overcome adversity and are recognized for their outstanding community involvement.

Horatio Alger Youth Seminars: Secondary schools in every state and the District of Columbia are invited to apply and are selected annually to host seminars focusing on career opportunities and public or community service.

Horatio Alger National Scholars Conference: All recipients of the Horatio Alger National Scholarships attend, as guests of the Association, an educational conference to meet with Association Members and gain an enhanced understanding of the American free enterprise system and a deeper insight into the operation of the federal government.

Horatio Alger State Scholarship & Student Achievement Programs: More than $150,000 is awarded to students who possess strength of character in the face of adversity, academic achievement, community involvement, and a desire to pursue a college education.

Horatio Alger Collegiate Partners: A premier network of colleges and universities from across the country works in partnership with the Association to provide special scholarship and financial aid opportunities for Horatio Alger National Scholars to attend their schools.

Horatio Alger Internship and Placement Service: An opportunity to gain practical work experience while attending college, with the possibility of permanent placement following graduation, is provided to students selected as Horatio Alger National Scholars.

Horatio Alger School of Excellence: Each year, a secondary school is recognized for outstanding achievement in working with students facing adversity, and a $5,000 educational grant is awarded to that school's district to further its work with youth.

State of Our Nation's Youth: An annual survey of America's students questions young people ages 14 to 18 about the people, institutions, and issues that are shaping their lives.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Association strives to increase public awareness of its educational services and carries the Horatio Alger message to millions of American families.

Television Broadcast of *Only in America:* Since 1993, the Annual Horatio Alger Awards has reached millions of American households through national broadcasts on PBS (1996-1999), CBS (1995), and NBC (1994 and 1993).

Television Series *Against the Odds:* A series of 30-minute programs broadcast on PBS that feature the inspiring real-life stories of the Association's Members.

Partnership with the National Educational Telecommunications Association: Through NETA's extensive educational network, the annual Horatio Alger Awards broadcast is available to more than 16,000 school districts across the nation with a curriculum guide for use in the classroom.

World Wide Web Home Page: The home page features biographical information about Association Members and Horatio Alger National Scholars as well as descriptions of the educational programs and activities of the Horatio Alger Association. (http://www.horatioalger.com)

PUBLICATIONS

Only in America: Opportunity Still Knocks announces annually the Horatio Alger Award recipients and National Scholarship recipients.

Quotations: Success Secrets of Power Thinkers is a collection of inspirational quotations and biographical information from the Members of the Horatio Alger Association.

The Forum, the Association's semiannual newsletter, provides current information about Members, Association activities, and educational issues.

Strive and Succeed, the Association's student newsletter, provides current information about the National Scholars, Association activities, and educational programs.

Charting the Course: The Next 50 Years details the Association's recent accomplishments and presents plans for future achievements.

The National Scholars Survey highlights the accomplishments of the Horatio Alger National Scholars from 1984 to the present.

Only in America: A Legacy of Achievement and An Investment in America's Future provide options for supporting the educational programs and activities of the Association and contributing to the organization's endowment fund.

The State of Our Nation's Youth report conveys the results of a national survey on the attitudes and beliefs of teenagers, and ***Portrait of Contrasts*** compares the results of this survey with the survey responses of Horatio Alger National Scholars.

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HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION

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